Des News 23 May 1970

MEN IN MODERN SCRIPTURE

Luke Johnson

At a conference of the Church at Amherst, Ohio, in 1832, a group of elders were called by revelation to serve as missionaries. Among them was Luke Johnson.

The charge given the elders is recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 75:

"Behold, I say unto you that it is my will that you should go forth and not tarry, neither be idle but labor with your might—

"Lifting up your voices as with the sound of a trump, proclaiming the truth according to the revelations and commandments which I have given you."

The Lord then makes the following promise to those who are obedient:

"And thus, if ye are faithful ye shall be laden with many sheaves, and crowned with honor, and glory, and immortality and eternal life."

A successful missionary, Luke Johnson became a member of the first high council of the Church, organized Feb. 17, 1834, at Kirtland. His name appears twice in the minutes of the organizational meeting of this group.

Luke Johnson was a member of Zion's Camp, traveling from Kirtland to Missouri and back. In 1835, he was ordained a member of the Council of the Twelve, and on several occasions, protected the Prophet Josph Smith from his enemies.

In 1837, Luke Johnson fell out of harmony with the leadership of the Church and was disfellowshipped. In 1838, he was excommunicated for apostasy. For the next several years, he taught school, studied medicine, and labored as a doctor.

Remaining friendly to the brethren, however, Luke Johnson was rebaptized at Nauvoo. He came west with the Saints in 1847 as a member of the first pioneer company of 143 persons who traveled under Brigham Young's leadership.

Eleven years later, in 1858, settling in St. John, Tooele County, Luke Johnson was named first bishop of that ward. He died three years later in full fellowship and faith at the age of 54.

out from over the window-sash, left the room, locked the door and commenced telling stories in the court room, to raise a laugh. When finally the court called for the prisoner, Elder Johnson walked into the room in the dark, put the nail into its place in the window, and went back and told the court that the prisoner had escaped. The officers rushed to the door and examined the fastenings which they found all secure. This created much surprise, and they swore that it was another "Mormon" miracle. Elder Johnson had arranged with John F. Boynton to help Bro. Smith out of the

1811. He was baptized ... period, and was a Teacher ... Church in 1831. He took a mission ... Erie county, Pennsylvania, in December, 1832, to preach the gospel and call the Elders to Kirtland to attend a school of the Prophets. He was ordained to the office of a High Priest, under the hands of Sidney Rigdon, in council, on the 21st day of June, 1833. During the winter of 1833 he worked on a farm and chopped cord wood near Kirtland. He was married to Caroline Grant, daughter of Joshua and Thalia Grant, February 14, 1833, by whom he had two daughters--Mary Jane and Caroline L. He went to Missouri in

JOHNSON, Luke S., a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles from 1835 to 1838, was the son of John Johnson and was born Nov. 3, 1807, in Pomfret, Windsor county, Vermont. In early life he assisted his father in farming, and remained with him until he received the gospel and was baptized by Joseph Smith May 10, 1831. In the meantime the family had removed from Pomfret, Vermont, to Hiram, Portage county, Ohio. Soon after his baptism Luke S. Johnson was ordained a Priest by Christian Whitmer and performed a mission to southern Ohio in company with Robert Rathburn, where they baptized several and organized a branch in Chippewa. Shortly after, together with Sidney Rigdon, he baptized fifty or sixty in New Portage, Ohio, and organized a branch. From there they went to Pittsburg, Penn., where Johnson baptized Rigdon's mother and eldest brother and [illegible] others; they also organized a [illegible] At a conference held in Orange, Cuyahoga county, Ohio, Oct. 25, 1831, Bro. Johnson was ordained a High Priest by Joseph Smith, and in 1832-33, in company with Seymour Brunson and Hazen Aldrich traveled as a missionary through Ohio, Virginia and Kentucky. They baptized over a hundred persons and organized branches of the Church in Lawrence county, Ohio, and Cabell county, Virginia. Nov. 1, 1833, Elder Johnson married Susan H. Poteet, in Cabell county, Virginia. At the organization of the first High Council of the Church, Feb. 17, 1834, he was chosen one of its members. In the following summer he went as a member of Zion's Camp to Missouri and back. Feb. 14, 1835, he was chosen, and on the 15th ordained one of the Twelve Apostles under the hands of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris, at Kirtland, [illegible] and during the summer of 1835 [illegible] through the Eastern States [illegible] conferences, preaching the gospel [illegible] and regulating the branches. He returned to Kirtland in September. The [illegible] winter he attended the Hebrew [illegible] and received his blessings in the House of the Lord in the spring of 1836, after which he performed a mission to the State of New York and Canada. After having baptized quite a number and organized a branch in Canada, he returned to Kirtland in the fall, where he upon two different occasions rendered the Prophet Joseph efficient aid in protecting him from his enemies. On another occasion [illegible] had a vexatious writ had been [illegible] against Joseph Smith [illegible] being supposed that he was [illegible] prosecution in consequence of his manner of solemnizing marriages. [illegible] Johnson got the privilege of serving the writ, and after arresting Smith, he took him to the magistrate's office. The court not being ready to attend to the case, Elder Johnson put the prisoner in a small room adjoining the entrance from the office and allowed his son Hyrum to accompany him. He then took a nail out from over the window-sash, left the [illegible] the door and com[illegible] in the court room [illegible] When finally the court called [illegible] prisoner Elder Johnson walked into the room in the [illegible] put the nail into its place in the window, and went back and told the court that the prisoner had escaped. The officers rushed to the door and examined the fastenings which they found all secure. This created much surprise and they swore that it was another "Mormon" miracle. Elder Johnson had arranged with John F. Boynton [illegible] help Bro. Smith out [illegible] window. Having partaken of the spirit of speculation, which at that time was possessed by many of the Elders and Saints in Kirtland, Elder Johnson's mind became darkened, and he neglected his duties as an Apostle and Saint. At a conference held at Kirtland, Sept. 3, 1837, he was disfellowshipped together with his brother Lyman and John F. Boynton. On the following Sunday, however, he confessed his faults, and was received back into fellowship, but was finally cut off for apostasy in Far West, Mo., April 13, 1838. After this he taught school in Cabell county, Virginia, for about a year, devoting his leisure time in studying medicine. He then returned to Kirtland, where he practiced as a physician and also engaged in various other occupations in order to obtain a living. He continued friendly to the Church and his former associates in the Priesthood, and in 1846 he was rebaptized in Nauvoo and came to Great Salt Lake valley in 1847 as one of the 143 Pioneers. In the year 1858 he settled St. John, Tooele county, Utah, and was appointed Bishop when that Ward was first organized. On the 9th of December, 1861, he died at the house of his brother-in-law, Orson Hyde, in Salt Lake City. Since his return to the Church he lived to the truth to the best of his ability and died in the faith. (See also "Millennial Star," Vol. 26, p. 834.)